Ten New Mexico small businesses recognized at Innovation Celebration April 3

March 26, 2014

Los Alamos, Sandia labs' expertise assists New Mexico small businesses

LOS ALAMOS, N.M., March 26, 2014—Ten New Mexico small businesses participating in projects using the technical expertise and assistance of Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories are being recognized at the 13th annual Innovation Celebration April 3 at Balloon Fiesta Park in Albuquerque. The celebration is part of Technology Venture Corporation's Innovation Summit.

Duncan McBranch, Los Alamos' Chief Technology Officer, is keynote speaker at the Innovation Celebration.

"The technical expertise Los Alamos and Sandia principal investigators provide to small business owners is another example of the vital importance of the national laboratories to the state of New Mexico and small business owners," said David Pesiri of Los Alamos' Richard P. Feynman Center for Innovation. "Since the New Mexico Small Business Assistance (NMSBA) program was created, national laboratory technology and expertise has helped thousands of small businesses in nearly every county in New Mexico. This is an outcome that our Laboratory is proud to be a part of and it's an accomplishment worth celebrating."

The New Mexico Small Business Assistance program was created by the New Mexico Legislature in 2000. Los Alamos National Laboratory joined the program in 2007. Last year, 354 small businesses in 29 counties received assistance through the NMSBA program. The businesses and individuals to be recognized are:

- **McFarland Instrumentation Services** – McFarland Instrumentation services designs and fabricates electronic instrumentation for analytical procedures and data analysis. Owner Malcolm Fowler wanted to validate the precision of his equipment; the NMSBA reached out to Los Alamos' Deb Summa who assembled a team that conducted tests of various materials using a unique high-resolution mass spectrometer, then monitored and evaluated measurements. As a result, McFarland Instrumentation was able to certify their methods and subsequently secured $40,000 in contracts with a Chicago company.

- **Data Center Transitions** - Bill Watts of Data Center Transitions designed MASS Lift, a novel lifting device that moves large computer server cabinets. However, the lift's motor threatened to interfere with the sensitive electronics stored in the cabinet. With NMSBA assistance, Watts worked Jeff Dabling and colleagues at Sandia National Labs to redesign the lift's power system. The redesigned system allowed Watts to reduce costs by 20 percent, keep production in Albuquerque and sell additional units to Microsoft.
- **Real Green Building Systems Leveraged Project** – Doug Lenberg of Real Green Building Systems, and other construction and real estate companies offering environmentally friendly home designs, sought unbiased analysis of their innovative features relative to industry baseline data. Through the NMBSA, Los Alamos' Steve Booth and Andy McCown demonstrated that green technology systems offer a payback in less than 10 years and provide economic benefits to homeowners and municipalities. Their study has attracted investors and increased business among participating companies.
- **Retriever Technology** – Andy Bartlett of Retriever Technology, which provides imaging software and hardware for scientific and industrial companies, received assistance from Bill O'Rourke of Sandia labs converting data from old seismograms into usable digitized formats. Because of this assistance, Retriever Technology secured a $1 million Small Business Innovative Research Phase II award.
- **Skyndex Leveraged Project** – Jeff Collins' company, Welltec, manufactures the Skyndex skin fold caliper, which measures body fat percentage. Collins' and four other companies requested assistance from Sandia labs' robotics experts for analysis, modeling and mechanical testing. Thanks to Sandia's product redesign, the projected benefit to the companies are an estimated $3 million in increased revenues as well as new markets for the Skyndex skin fold caliper.
- **SportXast** – Molly Cernicek used NMSBA assistance to identify computer vision algorithms that can be integrated with the SportXast smartphone app for automatic player tagging and highlighting of sporting events. Los Alamos' Steven Brumby advised SportXast of affordable, accessible emerging computer vision tools. Through the NMSBA/Los Alamos assistance, SportXast has since hired a computer vision developer to integrate computer vision tools into its Smartphone app.

Four other companies that received assistance from other New Mexico research partners on contract with the NMSBA also will be recognized. They are Customizabooks, Enchanted Woodworks, Sigma Labs Inc., and Solaro Energy.

Since its inception, the NMSBA has provided 2,195 New Mexico small businesses with more than $39 million in technical assistance. The program helped create and retain nearly 3,510 jobs at a mean salary of $38,735. Through the assistance of the NMSBA, these companies also saw their revenue increase by more than $172.5 million, while their operating costs decreased by $79 million. These companies in turn invested $56.3 million in other New Mexico goods and services and received $59.6 million in new funding and financing.